

(NOTE TO SUPERVISORS: Please ensure that employees without access to e-mail receive a paper copy of this message.)

Memorandum

To: All Employees – D.C. Metropolitan Area

From: P. Lynn Scarlett
Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: **Safety and Security Measures**

The world we live in has changed dramatically in our lifetime, particularly since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. As a result, we have spent a great amount of time focusing on the safety and security of our employees throughout the Department.

Many of you have contacted me personally to question what we have done since 9-11 to make your work environment a safer place. I want to take this opportunity to tell you that we have focused a lot of effort and resources on this matter. I would like to tell you about some of the safety and security precautions we have in place for your well-being and advise you of the future steps we have planned. I want to assure you that your safety and well-being, as well as that of the public, continues to be our number one priority. Our human resources, law enforcement, safety, building, and security staffs are working closely and collaboratively to implement the most viable procedures to carry out this commitment to you.

Even before the Department of Homeland Security raised the security level from yellow (elevated) to orange (high), we took appropriate measures to further secure both the Main (MIB) and the South (SIB) Interior buildings and other DC area locations. For example, we:

- increased patrols inside and outside of the buildings,
- are strictly enforcing the “wear-badge” policy,
- are thoroughly checking all vehicles that come into our parking facilities,
- have an updated *Occupant Emergency Plan* (OEP) in place,
- have provided over 30 training classes on the OEP this last year,
- have provided 5 training classes on First Aid and CPR since 9-11
- posted evacuation procedures and the names of wing and sector wardens by the elevators,
- held various types of alarmed and non-alarmed evacuation drills preparing for both “shelter-in-place” and “leave-the-building” situations,
- conducted in-depth briefing sessions for Departmental leadership,
- developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers which we plan to update and distribute, as appropriate, through management (Attachment)

worked to develop an Employee Emergency Contact Information System (in progress),
issued a March 19 memorandum on Emergency Information and Planning,
developed policy to continue coverage of Federal Employee Health Benefits for employees called to active duty, at no cost to the employee,
encouraged supervisors to support telework during times of heightened security, and
served as liaison and conduit for employee emergency information being released by the Office of Personnel Management.

In addition to stepped-up security, we are completing several other actions:

All Employees Meeting to be Held: We plan to hold two “All Employees” meetings to discuss safety and security on Wednesday, March 26 at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in the MIB Auditorium. We will hold similar meetings in other locations within the D.C. Metropolitan area so that all local Interior employees have benefit of this discussion and an opportunity to ask questions and gain clarification. We will work collaboratively with bureaus to assist in holding similar meetings at other locations within the Metro area.

New Emergency Exits: We installed new emergency exits in the Rachel Carson Room and end of the 2200W corridor of the MIB. Before the end of the calendar year, a new accessible egress route will also be constructed at the end of the 1200E corridor.

New Public Address Systems: We installed a fully-functional, temporary public address system (PA) in the MIB and will use it for future drills and announcements. GSA awarded a contract for the installation of the PA system in the SIB which should be installed by the end of FY03.

Vehicle Barrier Systems for the MIB Garage Entrance Ramps: In FY03, we will install a vehicle barrier system on each of the MIB entrance ramps.

Option Plans for Potential Threats: Our health and safety staff have developed Option Plans for most potential terrorist threats which we will share with employees shortly. During upcoming “shelter-in-place” drills, we will gain and share experience reacting to the various types (such as biological or chemical attacks). The next drills are tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 27. While it is impossible to plan for every type of threat, we will do our utmost to train you to react to the most likely scenarios. We are in constant contact with homeland security, health and safety and other emergency response organizations to ensure that we are aware of and respond to any threats or safety risks in a timely and appropriate manner.

Emergency Drills: We will continue to conduct emergency evacuation drills and will give all occupants advance notice of these drills. Please take them seriously and give them your full attention and cooperation. We also ask you to share any observations or recommendations that we should consider to improve our safety and security responses.

Emergency Evacuation Changes: We recently completed the last of the office relocations which vacated the 6th wing of the MIB so modernization of that wing could begin. If you are among those who relocated to new offices over the past few months, please take the time necessary to learn about the occupant emergency procedures and evacuation routes in your new areas. Now that the construction work in the 6th wing has begun, the stairways within those areas have been closed to occupants. The doors located behind the new temporary barriers are not emergency exits and should not be entered . For those that have not relocated, you should re-familiarize yourself with evacuation procedures. Throughout the entire multi-year project, the E Street Lobby entrance will remain open for our normal daily use and can be used for emergency exit.

Status of Operations: If the buildings must close for any reason after business hours, you should call the emergency information phone number (202/208-6606 and listed on the back of your Identification Card), visit the DOI Website (<http://www.doi.gov> --this site also has a hot link to the OPM website, <http://www.opm.gov>), visit the <http://ready.gov> web site for homeland security information, OR monitor local radio and television broadcasts.

Employee Awareness and Preparation: While we will take all possible action to ensure your safety and well-being, we need your help, as well. Please be vigilant in reporting suspicious activity or safety hazards (NBC Security on 208-5111 or the NBC Division of Facilities Management Services on 208-7182). Understand your responsibilities during emergencies. Visit the OPM and Homeland Security websites identified under Status of Operations and get informed about common-sense precautions, such as keeping emergency medications, a change of clothing, and some non-perishable food items at work. The more you know, the more prepared you will be in the event of an emergency.

I apologize for the length of this memorandum, but I wanted you to have full knowledge and awareness of the actions we have been taking up to this point in time, and all of the work yet to come. I am attaching a copy of questions and answers our Human Resources staff have developed and a list of relevant web sites you should visit to educate yourself about safety and security issues. In addition, we will distribute hard copies of OPM Emergency Guides at the upcoming meetings or you may visit the OPM web site to print copies locally. We are working hard to protect you. Now, as we move aggressively forward to implement future appropriate safety and security actions, I ask for your commitment to do your part as well, by keeping yourself informed by reading these materials.

Attachments (2):

List of Safety and Security Web Sites

Questions and Answers

Attachment

LIST OF WEB SITES WITH SAFETY AND SECURITY INFORMATION

There is an abundance of safety and security information on the Internet. The following is a sample of sites ranging from fairly generic to very specific.

<http://www.ready.gov>

<http://www.opm.gov/emergency/>

<http://www.fema.gov/>

<https://disasterhelp.gov/portal/jhtml/index.jhtml>

<http://www.opm.gov/ehs/terrorism.asp>

<http://www.bioterrorism.slu.edu/>

<http://cindi.usgs.gov/>

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencyresponse/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/default.html>

<http://www.nsc.org/issues/emerg/99esc.htm>

<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/HomelandSecurity/>

<http://hazmat.dot.gov/guidebook.htm>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/digitaldan/disaster/disasters.shtml>

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Safety and Security

1. Should we go to a Code Red alert, what measures or plans will be in effect when this happens and what security measures have been taken on behalf of employees?

The Department of Interior has developed protective and preparedness measures in accordance with the Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS). These measures vary depending on the HSAS Threat Condition and the local situation. The HSAS provides a national framework and effective means to disseminate information to Federal, State and local authorities, and to the American people. Generally, as the alert level is elevated employees will see visible increases in security measures. At Condition Severe (Red),

government agencies will evaluate the need to redirect some employees and to possibly close selected facilities. Because of the large number of variables, we are not able to discuss all of the specific security measures. You should familiarize yourself with your local facility's Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP). In addition, general information is provided at the Homeland Security web site <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=29> and <http://www.ready.gov>, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) web site, <http://www.fema.gov>.

2. If we go to high security alert Code Red, will we be released from work? Would we check for office closure by calling the same phone number we call during inclement weather and would it be announced on local television and radio broadcasts?

At Threat Condition Severe (Red), the closure of public and government facilities is considered and evaluated based on specific circumstances. In the Washington DC area, OPM will announce closure of facilities through the media and on their web site, <http://www.opm.gov>. Additional instructions for Department of the Interior employees can be found on our web site <http://www.doi.gov/emergency>, or by calling (202) 208-6606. Employees in locations outside of Washington DC will receive instructions and information through locally developed procedures. This includes information on who employees can contact within their individual bureau or office.

3. In the event of a Code Red emergency, will visitors and other non-employees be allowed in our buildings? What about contractors?

When an alert level increases, a special security notice is issued which discusses security measures to be implemented as appropriate, given the specific circumstances. Depending on the situation, access to the building may or may not be limited for employees and contractors.

4. What will the average employee notice in terms of the difference between a Code Orange versus a Code Red alert?

The Homeland Security Advisory System includes five Threat Conditions (green/low, blue/guarded, yellow/elevated, orange/high, and severe/red). When Threat Conditions change, Department of Interior and other government departments and agencies review their options for protective measures for the new threat level, and determine which measures to implement based on the specific situation. A description of the Threat Conditions and general information on protective measures is described on the Department of Homeland Security homepage, <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=29>. At the severe condition (red), agencies may CONSIDER redirecting personnel to address critical emergency needs and closing public and government facilities.

5. What plan does the Secretary have to communicate with her workforce about what is going on and in particular where DOI may be most at risk in terms of activities/facilities that are attractive targets for terrorists?

As appropriate, the Secretary communicates with Interior Department employees about work force security and safety initiatives by using a variety of tools to get the word out. Since 9/11, the Secretary and the assistant secretariat have regularly communicated with employees through e-mails, memoranda, and departmental publications. Often, communications to employees come from the Deputy Secretary, the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, and from bureau/office leadership.

Employees are also encouraged to monitor the Department's web site at www.doi.gov, call the emergency information hotline at 202-208-6606, or check for information through other appropriate (and announced) local means. Employees without access to e-mail should rely on their supervisors to notify them of emergency changes in the Department's alert notifications or threat status. The Department will make a concerted effort to notify organizations without e-mail or web access during emergency situations.

Interior work sites that are considered higher risk terrorist targets have been identified and the appropriate staff have been notified. These sites have been designated high priority areas and their security systems and emergency procedures have been upgraded. Many of these areas, particularly the icons of national significance as well as a number of dams, power plants, and bridges under Interior management—operate under heightened security conditions and have specific plans for handling potential threats.

6. Are government employees authorized to access news websites for information? How will employees be kept up to date on world events or local threats during the workday?

Federal employees are authorized during the workday to periodically access news reports to stay current on local and nation security developments, either through news web sites or radio/television broadcasts. A majority of Interior offices have access to one or more of these media during the day. Many Interior offices and agencies also are organizing e-mail and telephone trees to disseminate timely information to their managers and employees.

Those employees without access to e-mails should obtain emergency information through their supervisors, or by monitoring radio and television bulletins released by local emergency management organizations.

7. What are the procedures and instructions for disabled employees who require assistance during an evacuation?

Nationwide – Disabled employees, including those requiring special assistance, must be included in emergency plans to assure their safety during an evacuation. Specific plans

and procedures have been developed and included in the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) specific to their facility. Training and drills are important components of the overall plan. Consult your supervisor or the individual responsible for the OEP at your facility to get the help you need. If you still do not receive the guidance and assistance you require, contact your bureau or office head.

Main and South Interior Buildings – Occupants requiring assistance during an evacuation (including the disabled) are self-identified and are assigned volunteer, pre-assigned “buddies” to assist them during an emergency evacuation. These occupants have the option of evacuating using special chairs which should be used only by trained personnel to transport the disabled down the stairs, or they can proceed to an “unaffected” waiting area after communicating their location with the warden and command center. Upon arrival at the scene, emergency responders will decide the best course of action (use of an elevator for evacuation, transport the disabled down the stairs, or having them continue waiting in an unaffected area with their pre-assigned buddy) after assessing the situation.

The modernization of the Main Interior Building, currently being performed by GSA, will include the installation of emergency generators which can be used for continuous elevator service in the event of a power outage, depending on conditions in the building.

8. In the event the emergency lighting in stairwells fails, could stairwell handrails be painted with florescent paint to assist in an evacuation?

We currently have battery-powered emergency lighting available throughout many Interior buildings. Such lighting should last for several hours, sufficient time to allow for safe building evacuation.

Nationwide – Each facility is designed differently and has a varying degree of risk; therefore, appropriate use of these materials will be determined for each individual facility.

Main and South Interior Buildings – While code does not require the use of “glow in the dark” tape, signs and paint, we are currently researching these products and are considering their use in both the Main and South Interior Buildings.

9. Will there be some kind of code set up that only employees know so that they can communicate regarding the status of building closures?

Employees in locations outside of DC will receive instructions and information about building status. Employees can also contact their bureau/office emergency coordinator for further information. The status of the federal government operations in the DC area will be announced to the media by the Office of Personnel Management and will be posted on the website at DOI employees in the Washington DC Area can also obtain information from our Emergency Information line at 202/208-6606 and on the internet from <http://www.doi.gov/emergency>.

10. What precautions have been taken in case of a bioterrorism attack? Is there enough water, food, supplies, etc. for all employees for at least 3 days? Will employees be prohibited from leaving the building? Is there a backup heating and cooling system that can be utilized?

There is no single strategy for preparing a response to potential terrorist attacks involving biological, nuclear, and chemical weapons. Response actions must be taken based on the attack and the circumstances involved; i.e., the type of weapon, location and distance from the attack, wind direction and other factors such as building construction, heating and air conditioning systems, design of windows and a wide range of other factors.

During some emergencies such as a tornado, civil disturbance, chemical leak or bio-terrorist attack, it may be safer for employees to “shelter in place.” We recognize the needs of occupants during such situations, and take specific measures to meet those needs commensurate with potential threats. In cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Personnel Management, General Services Administration, and other Federal and local officials, we continue to research additional measures that can be taken to protect building occupants. Employees will not be prohibited by DOI from leaving our facilities; however those opting to leave must do so in a manner that will not expose their co-workers to outside dangers. We are exploring means to accomplish this, but stress that for the safety of employees and their families, employees should discuss emergency plans with their families in advance rather than rushing needlessly outside into danger.

Nationwide – First, everyone must be aware of and familiar with the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) for their facility.

Main and South Interior Buildings – in the event of a chem/bio-terrorism attack in the DC area, the heating and ventilation systems will be closed within 10 minutes. We have commissioned studies through GSA for additional protection of the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system from chemical, biological and nuclear attack. We have purchased an emergency supply of water. The Main Interior Building carries a three-day supply of food and water.

The Office of Personnel Management has also developed a Federal Employee's Emergency Guide which can be found at:

<http://www.opm.gov/emergency/index.asp#employee> . In this guide, OPM recommends creating a personal safety kit which includes: "additional dosages of any medication that an employee requires, bottled water, personal hygiene supplies, long-sleeve shirt or jacket, and emergency contact numbers. You may also think about adding such small items as snack food, an extra pair of glasses or other "comfort" items you think are necessary."

Decisions on what precautions to take at each facility may be based on the level of risk at each specific facility.

11. If employees “shelter in place,” what provisions are being made for them to keep in touch with their families?

All employees are urged to discuss emergency plans with their families in advance, as it may be difficult to communicate during an actual emergency. Part of the “sheltering in place” plan includes exit points for employees who still desire to leave even after being thoroughly briefed on the crisis. Recognizing that cell and telephone communications may be difficult or disrupted during emergency situations, we will do what we can to help employees communication with their families during a “shelter in place” emergency.

12. If employees must evacuate the building, what are the evacuation procedures?

Everyone must be aware of and familiar with the Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) for their facility. Employees should also monitor radio and television emergency bulletins for information on specific evacuation routes in their local area.

13. Under what circumstances will travel be curtailed?

This will depend on the nature and scope of the emergency. In general, mission-related travel and training will continue if determined not to pose a potential safety hazard to employees. If it is deemed necessary to cancel or curtail travel, employees will be notified in as timely a manner as possible. If questions arise as to whether travel is still authorized and/or appropriate, employees should always check with their immediate supervisor.

With regard to overseas travel during periods of possible conflict, such travel must always be mission-critical and should be avoided whenever possible. Employees with plans to travel overseas should keep in contact with their supervisor and their bureau or Departmental Office of International Affairs to keep abreast of the current situation. Employees planning to travel overseas may also check with the Department of State country advisory notices <http://travel.state.gov/travelwarnings.html> before initiating travel. Employees who are already in travel status when a conflict arises or is imminent should immediately contact their supervisor for further instructions. In the event of an evacuation from a foreign area, employees must comply with any and all Department of State instructions.

14. If employees aren't able to get to work, what options are available to them?

To the extent mission-critical work can be accomplished from an alternate location, the Department encourages the use of telework whenever appropriate. Authorization to participate in the telework program and applicable telework policies and procedures can be obtained from your supervisor or servicing personnel office. In organizations which have a union recognized as the exclusive representative, careful attention should be paid

to any collective bargaining agreement which may have provisions that cover telework procedures or might be impacted by telework procedures.

15. Do we have procedures in place to protect us from another building that may be contaminated? How will they be communicated?

In this situation, we will generally: limit access to our buildings; close ventilation to the buildings; and secure door and other entrance ways. Information about the emergency will be communicated through the emergency procedures appropriate to your facility and location. Employees outside of the building should listen to media broadcasts about the emergency.

16. What is the chain of command and/or who grants authority to personnel for added responsibilities in case of terrorist activities? Does the authority automatically go to the next in line by default or does it have to be delegated?

Provisions have been made to assure that legal authority exists to provide successors for key leadership who will assume responsibility to direct the Department and its bureaus should officials be inaccessible or incapacitated. These authorities have been delegated to specific individuals.

17. What are our Labor Relations Obligations during an emergency?

While the Management Rights provision in labor law allows management to take whatever actions may be necessary to carry out the agency mission during emergencies, we will make a maximum effort to keep the union informed of our actions and give them an opportunity to provide input if time permits.

18. If emergency supplies are required can employees use a personal or government-issued charge card belonging to another employee to buy necessary supplies? Will employees be reimbursed? What emergency measures are in place to acquire necessary supplies like food, water, gas, etc.?

No, charge cards, regardless of whether they are personal or Government-issued are not transferable. Under no circumstances should you use another employee's charge card. If you use another employee's charge card, you will **not** be reimbursed for emergency supply purchases, since this practice is not authorized. Neither is reimbursement guaranteed across-the-board if you use your **own** charge card for emergency supply purchases. Making sure that an authorized purchase cardholder and/or a warranted contracting officer are part of your emergency response team is an important part of your office's emergency response plan.

Please refer to your Occupant Emergency Plan to find out what emergency measures are in place to acquire necessary supplies like food, water, gas, etc.

19. How can we maintain communication with the government facility closest to ours so that we can stay tuned with other installations to compare information?

Local managers are encouraged to communicate with other agencies, particularly through Federal Executive Boards.

20. What is an Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP)?

The Occupant Emergency Plan provides procedures to protect life and property in federally occupied space under stipulated emergency conditions. Each federal facility is required to have an OEP. The highest-ranking official of the primary occupant agency of a Federal facility is responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining an OEP.

21. Are copies of the applicable Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) and Continuity of Operations (COO) Plan going to be provided to employees? If they will not be provided to all employees, whom will they be provided to and how will pertinent information be communicated to all employees?

The OEP specifies procedures to be taken by employees and various offices during emergencies. The plan is quite detailed and includes names of employees responsible for facilities operation, safety and security. The COO Plan provides procedures to assure that the Department of the Interior is capable of meeting its responsibilities to the public during emergency situations; it does not provide information applicable to employee safety. Because of the sensitive nature of some information in each plan, general distribution of the documents will not be made. Much of the information in the OEP, however, will be made available to employees and copies of each document have been provided to all appropriate individuals. In addition, the important employee information in each document will be communicate through memorandums, e-mails, handouts, town-hall meetings, and other appropriate means.

22. What are the procedures for checking IDs?

Procedures for the Main and South Interior Buildings require the security officer to touch the ID card to ensure the card is properly reviewed to match the photo with the person, to read the name, ensure the card is authentic and to check the expiration date. Employees and visitors should display their ID's in a visible location at all times while in the Interior Complex. If you observe a stranger without an appropriate badge, notify your supervisor or security immediately.

23. If there is a Code Red alert and Federal offices are closed, how do I know if I have been identified as an essential federal employee who must report to work?

The process of designating employees as “emergency” personnel and notifying them as such is done on an ongoing basis. Employees deemed emergency personnel have been or will be clearly notified. If, for some reason, you are still unsure of your status in this regard, immediately contact your supervisor and he or she can provide clarification.